Automated Commercial Environment (ACE): Business and Technology Benefits

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
Charles R. Armstrong
Executive Director, Customs Modernization Office
7501 Boston Blvd.
Washington, DC
Charles.R.Armstrong@customs.treas.gov

ABSTRACT:
The Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) is Customs first major modernization project. Through ACE, Customs will process imports more efficiently and that means moving goods through the ports and on to market faster and at lower cost. The trade community will also be able to process its business with Customs primarily electronically with paper held to a minimum.

The current Automated Commercial System (ACS) simply will not meet the increasingly complex, long-term requirements mandated by the growth in trade and Customs enforcement responsibilities. Customs ability to meet its objectives depends heavily on successfully modernizing its business functions and the information technology (IT) that supports those functions. Together through ACE, Customs and the Trade will use technologies such as the internet, frame relay and wireless communications to replace time-consuming and labor-intensive transactions with improved business processes. These processes will include:

- Remote filing
- Consolidated statements and periodic payment
- Reduced data entry
- Streamlined automated manifests
- National account management
- Streamlined billing, collections, refunds, quota and duty filings

ACE will also support better targeting and more efficient detection by leveraging technologies such as relational databases, non-intrusive inspection, data mining and mass storage devices, digital imaging and digital forensics.

When ACE is fully deployed, all service ports will be able to participate in an integrated, fully automated information system. Import and export data will be effectively collected, analyzed and distributed. And the Trade community will be experiencing the benefits of nationwide account-based processing.